

January
2013



MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT

RainScapes Gazette

RainScapes Rewards

Rebate amounts are going up!

The New Year has brought increased rebate amounts! The RainScapes program will be basically doubling property lifetime maximums. Residential properties will be eligible for up to \$2,500 in rebate money while the commercial properties will be eligible for up to \$10,000 per parcel! We are now basing the individual rebate amounts on a \$1.00 per gallon model. So for every gallon of water a project can store, we will rebate \$1.00, based on receipts. Check back in late January for an updated website with the new schedule of project limits. We will also be sending an email out to all of our applicants detailing the new amounts as they pertain to their property.

rainscapes@montgomerycountymd.gov

RainScapes Links

[RainScapes Main Page](#)

[RainScapes Online Applications](#)

[RainScapes Design Manuals](#)

[RainScapes Resources](#)



Keep Montgomery County Beautiful Winners!

Recently, the 26th annual "Keep Montgomery County Beautiful" community beautification award ceremony handed out 56 awards. This is an annual competition sponsored by MCDOT. Many of the winners were RainScapes rebate projects or were projects that were helped by RainScapes. These awards were for many

different landscaping projects in Montgomery County. Projects include municipal street plantings, community plantings, community landscape projects, outdoor projects at commercial and retail locations, outdoor projects at schools/government buildings/hospitals/churches, under-19 age groups, sustained

maintenance, photographs of Montgomery County landmarks, adopt-a-road participants and forestry stewardship. The following list identifies those winners who were helped or influenced by the RainScapes program.

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Keep Montgomery County Beautiful Continued

Award of Excellence: Eastern Middle School rain garden. Installed by students with help from Friends of Sligo Creek and the RainScapes for Schools program.

Award of Excellence: Pinecrest Elementary School. Installed by girl scout troop 1549 with the help of the Woodmoor Green Team and materials from the RainScapes for Schools program

Award of Excellence: Wheaton Triangle Conservation Garden. Installed as a RainScapes

demonstration project with Green Wheaton.

Award of Merit: American Elm Park installed with help from Friends of Sligo Creek. Plants were provided by RainScapes.

Award of Excellence: St. James Episcopal Church Vestry Gardens, American Plant Landscape Division. This is a RainScapes commercial rebate.

Award of Excellence: Melvin J. Berman Hebrew Academy this was

installed as a RainScapes commercial rebate project.

Award of Distinction: Rockville High School (RHS) Conservation Landscape. Installed by RHS Horticulture and Science Class Students with help from the RainScapes for schools program.



Featured RainScape: A rain garden with an aqueduct

This rain garden was installed because the homeowners patio kept flooding in the rain. The design dilemma was the low elevation of the patio which was outside of a “walk-out” basement. Due to the low elevation of the patio, the rain garden had to go up hill from the downspout.

So how do you direct the rain water up hill with a elevation gain of about 15 feet? You build an aqueduct. This aqueduct intercepts the rain water at the rooftop and channels it towards the rain garden where it drops onto a splash block. The aqueduct is made of cedar and lined with aluminum.

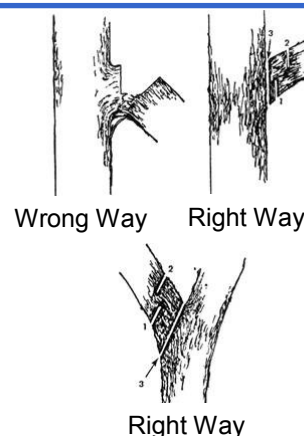


Tree Tip: “Pruning”

Did you know that late winter is the best time to prune your trees?

Pruning trees and shrubs just before they break dormancy gives the plants the best chance to heal the wounds before decay gets in. It is also much easier than when they are in full leaf! But wait! Do you have a tree or shrub with showy flowers? If you prune them now, chances are you'll remove this year's flowers. So, on these plants wait until immediately after they finish blooming. Either way, be sure to make clean smooth cuts at

the branch collar. Follow the guidelines found in [The Tree Owner's Manual](#). (see pages 18 to 22).



Green Streets Program

In May 2012, DEP coordinated with MCDOT to complete a Green Streets project in the Forest Estates neighborhood in Wheaton. The Green Streets projects use a more natural, small-scale approach called Low Impact Design (LID). This is where stormwater is directed towards a garden where it can be naturally filtered by the soil instead of directing the dirty stormwater into a pipe which leads to a stream. This approach

cleans stormwater, replenishes groundwater, protects our streams and protects overall urban watershed health. These projects are known as bio-retention gardens which are similar to rain gardens but are engineered to capture and filter more stormwater.

For more information, see our Green Streets [Brochure](#) or visit our project webpage at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/restorationprojects

[restorationprojects](#), click Sligo Creek, then Forest Estates Low Impact Design Project.



Stream Stewards Volunteer Program

In honor of the 26th Annual Community Service Day, the Department of Environmental Protection partnered with the Muddy Branch Alliance and the Seneca Creek Watershed Partners to mark storm drains in a community to help prevent litter flowing to our rivers and streams. On Saturday, October 27, 2012, twenty volunteers spent two hours learning about issues affecting our local waters and marked over 40

storm drains. Storm drains in Montgomery County dump rain water directly into local streams. The storm drain markings will hopefully prevent people from polluting these streams. Uninformed people don't only throw trash down these storm drains. They also dump used oil and antifreeze down the drain as well as soap from washing their cars. Even leaves in a storm drain can be considered nutrient pollution.

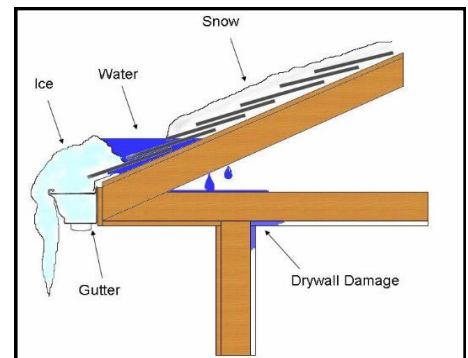
Anyone interested in helping with future storm drain marking projects, please contact Ana Arriaza at 240-777-7778 or ana.arriaza@montgomerycountymd.gov



Time to Winterize your Rain Barrels

If you haven't done so already, it's time to winterize your rain barrels. The winterization process will depend on what kind of barrel you have. The basic idea is to divert water away from your barrel in freezing conditions. One technique is to disconnect your downspout from the barrel and re-direct it towards the ground. This may require the use of a flexible downspout extension pipe so you can get the

water away from your foundation. You can then cover your rain barrel or flip it over to keep water from freezing inside of it. This picture shows what can happen if you don't disconnect your rain barrel. Once the barrel freezes it can back up water into the downspout which also freezes. Eventually your gutters freeze which can back up melting snow/ice and cause your roof to leak. So protect your gutters and winterize!



Invasive Organisms in Firewood

Firewood moved from one location to another has the potential to introduce highly destructive pests into our forests. In Maryland, it is illegal to move hardwood firewood out of Prince George's or Charles Counties because those areas are under quarantine for a devastating insect pest, the emerald ash borer. In many places, however, firewood is a pathway that is outside of normal restrictions and is moved

largely by individuals with little or no knowledge about quarantine or regulations. Just because you can't visibly see insects in your firewood doesn't mean they aren't there. A lot of the time they are in their larval state when they are inhabiting the firewood. Some invasive insects and diseases that can be found in Maryland firewood are [Emerald Ash Borer](#), [Gypsy Moth](#), [Oak Wilt](#), [Dutch Elms](#), [Sirex Wood](#)

[Wasp](#) and [Asian Longhorn Beetle](#). A good rule of thumb is to "Buy it where you burn it".



Emerald Ash Borer larva in firewood.

Invasive Plant of Concern

[English Ivy](#) (*Hedera helix*) is a widely used evergreen ornamental vine/groundcover native to Europe and Asia. It was brought to the U.S. by European immigrants during colonial times. It is still used in landscaping today because of its vigorous growth, low maintenance, and ornamental value. It can spread through rhizomes or seeds. Ivy spreads so vigorously that it can cut off the sunlight to other understory plants. Once the other plants

have died there be a monoculture known as an "Ivy Desert". This plant can also climb trees which can cutoff the sunlight to the leaves. This in combination with the extra wait added can create a dead tree prone to toppling over. The best way to remove English ivy from the ground is to cut it off at the roots and roll it up like you would and old carpet. You will then have to spend the next 1-3 years pulling up any new plants. To remove it from trees you can

carefully cut it where its growing on the trunk. Be careful not to cut into the tree itself. The rest of the vine in the tree will eventually die and fall off. Dispose of in the trash.



Native Plants Of Interest

Winter is the time for red in the landscape. There are many native plants that offer winter interest. Some of which offer red berries, or red stems throughout the winter months. Nothing looks better in winter than a red branch or red berries back dropped by some snow. Not only do these plants look good in winter, they often offer winter habitat and food to wildlife. Two really nice plants that are red in winter are Red Twig Dogwood and Winterberry.

[Red Twig Dogwood](#) (*Cornus sericea*)



[Winterberry](#) (*Ilex verticillata*)



App. and Book of Interest

App. of Interest:

[Florafolio](#)

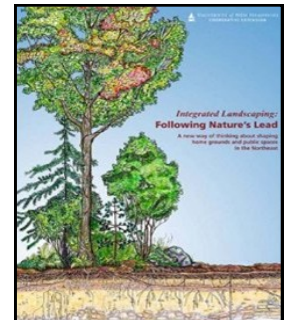
Florafolio is the perfect guide for anyone who wants to identify species in the wild or garden. This app focuses on the stunning variety of trees, shrubs, perennials, ferns, vines, and grasses that are indigenous to the North Eastern



Book of Interest:

[Integrated Landscaping: Following Nature's Lead](#)

Integrated Landscaping treats each site as a system of plant and animal communities, considering their interrelationships with each other and their environment.



Events of Interest

[RainScapes Rain Garden Workshop](#)

Learn how to you can transform your yard into a natural ecosystem to help soil capture and filter rainwater. Use RainScapes techniques to evaluate your yard and gain the knowledge needed to create a rain garden.

\$10.00 Registration is required
Fri. 3/1/13 & Sat. 3/2/13 10am – 1pm
@ Brookside Gardens

Course #'s are 219249 (Fri) and 219250 (Sat)

[*RainScapes Rain Barrel Workshop](#)

Learn how gathering water from your rooftops can help control stormwater impacts from your yard . Rain barrel with fittings and easy instructions for installation are provided.

\$10.00 Registration is required
Fri. 4/12/13 & Sat. 4/13/13 10am-1pm
@ Brookside Gardens

*Course has not been posted yet. Course #'s are 219299 (Fri) and 219300 (Sat) Parkpass.org

[*RainScapes Conservation Landscape Workshop](#)

Learn how conservation-based landscaping techniques can beautify your yard. We'll go over how to design and install a conservation landscape.

\$10.00 Registration is required
Fri. 5/31/13 & Sat. 6/1/13 10am-1pm
@ Brookside Gardens

*Course has not been posted yet. Course #'s are 219301 (Fri) and 219302 (Sat) Parkpass.org